

25 March 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: Associate Deputy Director for Management  
and Services

SUBJECT : Psychological Research

As requested, the following information concerning psychological research in the Office of Medical Services is provided.

1. Definition

Psychological research refers to those activities in which the methods of psychology are applied to studies of Agency human resources. Of particular interest are those behavioral areas concerned with ways of maximizing productivity and effective utilization of resource categories in accordance with Agency requests for such information.

2. General

Research by doctorate level psychologists is conducted in two OMS organizational elements -- the Psychological Services Staff (PSS) and the Psychiatric Staff (PS).

3. Types of Research

Types of psychological research performed and examples are as follows:

a. PSS

PSS research is required for two purposes: to meet the needs of consumers who come to PSS with questions requiring a research answer, and to establish a base and continuing guidelines for on-going programs of psychological service. In terms of components serviced, PSS research services are Agency-wide. Types and examples fall into three general categories:

(1) Attitude surveys: the systematic collection and analysis of attitudinal data pertaining to problems of concern to Agency managers. In the

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past year, major attitude studies have been completed or are on-going in the MG Career Service and the Office of Finance (DD/M&S), the Office of Economic Research (DDI), and the Information Services Group (DDO).

(2) Human Factors studies: this involves the application of the experimental method to the study of specific systems design problems where optimizing the human element in the system is critical to the function of the system. In the past year, major efforts of this type have been undertaken in NPIC (DDS&T), and in OBG [REDACTED] (DDI). STATSPEC

(3) Psychological factors in job performance: the focus here is in identifying the characteristics of successful performers in a given job or class of jobs, using psychological data to correlate with (and ultimately to predict) job performance. Research of this type serves both the office or component directly, by giving them a better understanding of the dimensions of successful performance in their particular activity, and also the service programs of PSS, by giving PSS assessors and counselors a better understanding of the kinds of people needed to work at the jobs for which PSS helps select people. In the past year, studies of this type have been completed or are underway in the [REDACTED] (DDO), OSR [REDACTED] (DDI), Office of Security, Office of Communications, and the Language School of OTR (DD/M&S). In addition, PSS has underway a follow-up study of Career Trainees assigned to the DDO, has looked at involuntary separatees for the Office of Personnel, and is analyzing its test data pertaining to Equal Employment Opportunity considerations.

b. PS

Psychological research is basically required in PS to assure the continued effectiveness of the selection and clinical psychological testing techniques of the Agency's Psychiatric Program, and to develop new techniques in response to changes in requirements in this program. Three types and examples are:

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The staffing complement of this branch provides for six positions -- 3 PhD and 1 MA level psychologists, and 2 secretarial/clerical employees. Currently however the PSS research effort requires additional personnel and these are drawn from other elements of PSS. At present it is estimated that the following PSS personnel are engaged in research:

4 1/2	PhD level psychologists
1	MA level psychologist
<u>2 1/2</u>	secretarial/clerical personnel
8	TOTAL

b. In PS the Clinical Branch staffing complement provides for one Clinical Psychologist and it is estimated that one-half of his time is devoted to psychological research in support of PS activities (with the other half devoted to the administering of clinical psychological tests and other activities in support of PS psychiatrists). It is also estimated that 10% of a secretary's services is in support of this psychologist's efforts in psychological research.

#### 5. Cost Effectiveness

In our judgment the dedication of 50% of one psychologist's time to psychological research in the PS is an extremely modest outlay for the benefits accruing to the Agency Psychiatric Program. Similarly in PSS, we believe the investment is clearly prudent. We estimate, for example, that the cost of the past year's PSS psychological research projects if conducted on external contracts would approximate \$1 million; salaries for the eight staff personnel who actually conducted this research were perhaps one-sixth of this. The intangible benefits of having in-house research are of course incalculable.

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Director of Medical Services

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